

**US-PAT-NO:** 6157621  
**DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER:** US 6157621 A  
**TITLE:** Satellite communication system

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**Abstract Text - ABTX (1):**

The Satellite Communication System disclosed in the specification is a dynamic constellation (C) of satellites (S). The present invention is capable of offering continuous voice, data and video service to customers across the globe on the land, on the sea, or in the air. The preferred embodiment of the invention comprises a low Earth orbit satellite system that includes 40 spacecraft (S) traveling in each of 21 orbital planes at an altitude of 700 km (435 miles). This relatively large number of satellites employed by the preferred embodiment was selected to provide continuous coverage of the Earth's surface at a high minimum mask angle (1230a) of forty degrees. Each of the individual 840 spacecraft (S) functions as an independent sovereign switch of equal rank which knows the position of its neighbors, and independently handles traffic without ground control. The satellites (S) are capable of transporting calls to millions of customers using portable (P), mobile (M) and fixed (F) residential and business terminals, and gateways (G) to public phone networks. The constellation uses the 20 and 30 GHz frequency bands for communications between Earth and the constellation (C), and the 60 GHz band for communicating among the satellites (S). The present invention is designed to support in excess of 2,000,000 simultaneous connections, representing over 20,000,000 users at typical business usage levels, and over 350 billion minutes of use per year. Only a system such as the preferred embodiment, which utilizes 840 satellites at a preferred minimum mask angle of forty degrees, can accomplish these challenging objectives.

**Brief Summary Text - BSTX (17):**

This specification is accompanied by two Appendices, A and B, recorded on two sheets of microfiche which contain software that may be employed to practice the invention. The first software listing may be used to implement that portion of the present invention which pertains to Autonomous Orbit Position Determination. The second software listing may be used to implement that portion of the present invention which pertains to Adaptive Routing. Both software programs were written for conventional personal computers and may be run on IBM Compatible systems employing a conventional DOS operating system. These software programs simulate selected embodiments of the present invention which are described below in full detail. The programs enable a person of ordinary skill in the arts to which the present

invention pertains to practice the invention without undue experimentation.

**Brief Summary Text - BSTX (21):**

Some extension of the century-old centralized telephone switching infrastructure has been achieved using geostationary satellites. These spacecraft, however, offer additional communications capabilities that are quite limited. Since these satellites operate in equatorial orbits, they are not accessible to customers located in high latitudes. Because they must share their orbit with many other services, their number is restricted to a relatively small population. Since all of these spacecraft occupy a single circular orbit, they can not be connected together in a geodesic network. A geodesic network, which could provide enormously greater capacity, must be generally spherical in shape. Geostationary satellites also suffer from a very serious disadvantage--the distant altitude of their orbits. These satellites are so far from Earth that the signal takes about one-quarter of a second to traverse the nearly 50,000 miles (80,000 km) along the round trip from the ground up to the satellite, and back to the ground. The delays sensed by the telephone user's ear that are introduced by this long round trip are not only annoying, but can render some conversations which are relayed between more than one geostationary satellite virtually unintelligible. Radio signals which are exchanged between a ground station and a geosynchronous satellite may also be impaired by this great round trip distance. A telephone customer on the ground using a portable phone who wanted to communicate directly with a satellite in geostationary orbit would need a telephone capable of producing an output in excess of hundreds of Watts. Generating this power output is not only thoroughly impractical for users of portable phones, but may also create a radiation hazard for the individual wielding the telephone.

**Brief Summary Text - BSTX (24):**

Bertiger, Leopold and Peterson describe a "Satellite Cellular Telephone and Data Communication System" in European Patent Application No. 891 184 58.2. This application sets out some of the details of Motorola's proposed Iridium.TM. communication system. The Iridium.TM. system is currently designed to utilize sixty-six (66) satellites in low Earth orbit which would generate relatively large footprints of radio beams due to their extremely low mask angle of eight and one half degrees ( $8\frac{1}{2}$ .degree.). Because of these very large footprints, the communications capacity that may be offered by the Motorola network would be substantially constrained. In addition, this system would employ "satellite-fixed cells" which are not defined by any constant boundaries on the Earth. These cells would sweep over vast regions of the Earth at very high speeds as the Iridium.TM. satellites fly overhead. This method of using satellite-

fixed cells introduces extremely complicated "hand-off" problems when one satellite moves out of range of supplying service with a subscriber. At that time, another satellite must assume the responsibility of supporting the subscriber's call without interruption.

**Brief Summary Text - BSTX (31):**

The preferred embodiment of the invention comprises a low Earth orbit satellite system that includes 40 spacecraft traveling in each of 21 orbital planes at an altitude of 700 km (435 miles). This relatively large number of satellites in the constellation was selected to provide continuous coverage of the Earth's surface at a high minimum mask angle of forty degrees with respect to the Earth's surface, thus avoiding foliage, terrain, and minimizing the length of the signal's passage through rain. Each of the individual 840 spacecraft functions as a sovereign switch which knows the position of its neighbors, and independently handles traffic without ground control. The satellites are capable of transporting calls to millions of customers using portable, mobile and fixed residential and business terminals, and gateways to public phone networks. The constellation uses the 20 and 30 GHz frequency bands for communications between Earth and the constellation, and the 60 GHz band for communicating among the satellites. The use of these extremely high frequencies allows for the use of relatively low power, miniaturized antenna components both on the ground and aboard the satellites. The entire constellation is designed to serve over twenty million subscribers and 60,000 full time DS-0 (64 kbps) circuits. The satellites will be coupled to traditional public and private phone systems on the ground through gateways which each utilize relatively large antennas and handle large volumes of call traffic. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, this interface between the terrestrial systems gateway and the terrestrial network is based on current standard ISDN interfaces to preserve compatibility.

**Brief Summary Text - BSTX (34):**

The present invention also incorporates novel software which runs on a processor onboard each satellite in the network. Autonomous Orbit Determination (AOD) algorithms provide each spacecraft with location information about its own position and the position of every other satellite in the network. This position information is used to determine the optimum pathway for routing call traffic among the satellites in the constellation. These data are also used to maintain each spacecraft in its proper orbital position, to steer antennas that receive and transmit signals from neighboring satellites, and may be used to offer Radio Determination Satellite Service (RDSS) which is superior to service currently available from the Global Positioning Systems (GPS) service. One embodiment of the AOD software

employs a ranging algorithm that calculates distances between spacecraft or between spacecraft and ground stations by measuring time delays that are inherent in the radio transmissions conveyed by the network. A second embodiment of the AOD software incorporates an algorithm which fixes spacecraft position by measuring the Doppler shifts of satellite or ground station transmissions. The AOD software also determines the attitude of the spacecraft using data from the antenna steering function. A third embodiment uses signals from known, fixed location ground terminals to determine both satellite location and attitude with great accuracy. Appendix A, which accompanies this specification, contains a complete computer program that embodies the AOD software.

**Brief Summary Text - BSTX (35):**

The AOD software generates position information that is used by a second computer program that utilizes a novel Adaptive Routing Algorithm (ARA). Like the AOD software, the ARA runs continuously on a processor on board each satellite. The output produced by the AOD program enables the ARA software to monitor the constantly-changing topology of the constellation. The ARA is also responsible for keeping track of the flow of call traffic through the nodes and links of the constellation and to compensate for traffic congestion and node failures. Appendix B, which accompanies this specification, contains a complete computer program that embodies the ARA software.

**Drawing Description Text - DRTX (9):**

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a hand-held portable phone. In the preferred embodiment, a hemispherical microwave antenna extends from the body of the phone on a collapsible mast.

**Drawing Description Text - DRTX (48):**

FIG. 79 is schematic depiction of a low Earth orbit satellite using transmissions of communications packets from a ground station to compute its orbital position.

**Drawing Description Text - DRTX (50):**

FIG. 81 is a block diagram of position determination circuitry.

**Drawing Description Text - DRTX (88):**

FIG. 116 is an illustration of the Callingsat.TM. satellite, as it would appear in its fully opened and deployed position in low Earth orbit. This illustration shows how the present invention would be deployed to provide communications links to Earth and to other Callingsats.TM. in its constellation.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (5):**

FIG. 3 presents functional blocks that each provide specialized signal processing. The components portrayed in FIG. 3 may reside in a hand-held personal phone (P), a mobile phone (M), fixed phone (F), or may be located at a gateway (G). Each of these blocks occupies a particular position along a communications pathway that extends up to one or more satellites S via an antenna, and then back down through the antenna to the terminal 30. Although this network 28 is capable of conveying virtually any form of information, including audio, video or data signals, FIG. 3 emphasizes a telephone call in which voices from either end of the call are transmitted through the network. The user gains access to the network by using the keypad and display 31 on terminal 30. Tones and text appearing on display 31 that help guide the user through the access procedure are generated by circuitry in stage 33. Once the call is established, the user's voice, which is represented in the drawing as an analog voice signal 32, is processed by an Analog-to-Digital "A/D" Converter 34. The digitized output 36 produced by converter 34 is a stream of ones and zeroes which are generated at the rate of 64,000 bits per second (KBIT/sec). The digital signal 36 is then processed by a speech encoder 38, yielding digital encoded speech 40. To protect telephone calls from eavesdroppers, the signal is then passed to encryption equipment 42, which utilizes an encryption key 44 from a signalling and control processor 46. Encrypted output 48 is then combined with sequence numbers 50, destination addresses 52, and signal packets 54 generated by processor 46. All these signals are merged together by a packet assembler 56 that composes packets 58. An error encoder 60 adds information to the packets 58 which enables the packets 58 to be checked for transmission-induced errors farther downstream. The packets 58 that are ready to be transported wait in a transmit buffer 62. In the last processing stage associated with the uplink portion of the journey, packets 58 are forwarded to transmitter 64, which is coupled to power control circuitry 66 and frame and bit timing circuitry 68. Finally, radio signals 72 are emitted from an antenna 70 which may be controlled by steering logic circuits 74.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (9):**

FIG. 6 is a schematic diagram that reveals the fundamental architecture of the present invention. A portion of the network 158 includes satellite nodes 160, which communicate over inter-satellite links 162. Signals are passed between the orbiting nodes 160 and gateway interfaces 166 over gateway-satellite links (GSLs) 164. The gateway interfaces 166 are, in turn, connected to operation support systems 168, feature processors 170, gateway switches 172 and database systems 174. As shown schematically in FIG. 6, the network 158 also communicates directly with customers 178 using hand-held phones and car phones 182 over mobile terminal satellite links (MTSL's) 176 and 180 that are capable of carrying 16 kilobits of

voice or data signals per second (kbps). Subscribers 186 using fixed terminal satellite links (FTSL's) 184 will be able to communicate at the rate of 64 kbps. The apparatus and methods depicted in FIGS. 3, 4, 5 and 6 are explained in greater detail in the sections appearing below entitled System Communication Links and Call Handling.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (11):**

FIG. 7 illustrates a hand-held portable phone that includes a Terrestrial Antenna for a Satellite Communication System. In the preferred embodiment, a hemispherical millimeter wave antenna 210 is used in conjunction with a portable telephone T that includes an LCD display screen L, a keypad K, and a battery pack B. In this version of a compact hand-held transceiver T, the antenna 210 is mounted on a collapsible mast M, which is shown in both the extended and stowed positions, EX and ST. FIGS. 8 and 9 exhibit top and side views of the invention 210A, which incorporates a generally trapezoidal, semi-conical housing. An inclined exterior surface 212 includes an upper and a lower portion 212a and 212b. This slanted ring 212 is attached to both a top circular surface 214 and a bottom circular surface 216. Both the side and top surfaces 212 and 214 provide support for a number of generally circular antenna elements 218. The patches 218 on the side 212 of the antenna 210A form an azimuth array, while those situated on the top 214 belong to an elevation array. These elements 218 utilize a conductive patch 220 bearing a cross-slot 222 that is formed from two individual perpendicular slots 222a and 222b. In one embodiment that is designed for use with the 20 GHz band, the diameter of the top surface 214 is 1.5 inches (3.8 cm). The side surface 212 is 1.0 inch (2.5 cm) high, and the bottom surface 216 is 2.5 inches (6.4 cm) wide. The nominal gain of this embodiment is approximately 20 dB. For the 30 GHz band, the diameter of the radiating patches shrink to about seventy percent of the larger 20 GHz antenna patch. For a trapezoidal geometry where the ratio of the bottom 216 and top 214 surfaces is 5/3, beams emanated by this embodiment are capable of being steered electronically over 360 degrees in the azimuth plane and plus or minus 60 degrees in the elevation plane. Active and passive microwave components are located within the housing attached to a ground plane.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (22):**

For optimal performance, the vertical axis of the antenna 210 should point at the zenith, but the beam steering capabilities of the antenna 210 can overcome the effects of using the transceiver T at different angles, as long as the signal from the portable phone remains pointed somewhere within the mask angle. If the orientation of the antenna 210 presents a problem for the subscriber, the hand-held unit can be connected to an external antenna which is mounted at a fixed angle or which is more sensitive. The low power design of the present invention substantially eliminates any radiation hazards.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (28):**

The switching methods disclosed and claimed in this patent application overcome the limitations encountered by conventional packet switching using virtual circuits. The fast packet switch utilizes a "datagram" approach that routes every packet conveyed by the system independently at every node in the network. The packets are directed along an optimized pathway through the network by a fast packet switch that directs traffic based on instructions from a microprocessor that continuously runs an adaptive routing algorithm. This microprocessor uses orbital position information generated aboard each spacecraft to monitor the rapidly changing topology of the constellation and the distribution of traffic among its nodes and links. The self-routing fast packet switch works in combination with an input packet processor, a routing cache memory, and an adaptive routing processor. The input packet processor functions like a gatekeeper or guide that extracts the destination node address from each packet and uses it to access routing information stored in the routing cache memory. The adaptive routing processor constantly updates the routing cache memory so each satellite has an accurate "knowledge" of the whereabouts of all its neighbors, and of the expected packet delay from adjacent nodes to all possible destination nodes. Based upon this position and expected delay information, the adaptive routing processor selects the best pathway from a particular satellite to a single neighboring satellite, and the packet is then moved through internal switch circuitry onboard the satellite on its way to other spacecraft in its journey to some eventual destination on Earth. The switching methods of the present invention optimize the utilization of the network facilities and minimizes transmission delays and variances of transmission delays. By precalculating the optimal route for each packet one step at a time at each satellite, the amount of time required to process individual packets is greatly reduced.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (29):**

FIG. 37 is a flow chart 410 that explains the switching process as it occurs on each satellite S in the constellation C. Orbital position information 412 is an input to an adaptive routing processor 414 which runs an adaptive routing algorithm (ARA) 416. The ARA 416 constantly monitors the changing locations of all the spacecraft S in the network, and also keeps track of communications traffic congestion among the links and nodes of the system. The adaptive routing processor 414 produces an output called "Next-node-in-path-to-destination" 418. As the name implies, this output 418 contains information and provides instructions for moving communications data through the network one node at a time.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (32):**

FIG. 38 presents a block diagram of a satellite switch node 442. One fast packet switch 438 is shown in the upper portion of the diagram, and receives signals from a series of circuit modules 444 and 452. Module 444 includes a receiver 446 coupled to receive antennas (not shown in FIG. 38), a demodulator 448, and a bit/packet synchronizer 450. Module 452 provides input packet control, and comprises circuits for error detection 454, packet tagging 456, local cache access 458 and network cache access 460. The series of input packet control modules 452 are also connected to control complex 462 through a local routing cache 476 and a local routing and handover processor 474. Another link to the input packet control modules 452 are coupled to the control complex 462 through a network routing cache 480 and a network management and routing processor 478. The control complex 462 is an array of circuit stages that include a signalling and call control processor 464, a test and maintenance processor 466, a system control and reload processor 468, a billing and traffic processor 470 and a satellite ephemerides processor 472. The control complex 462 is coupled to a communications processor 482, a spare processor 484 and a beam steering processor 486, which is connected to output packet control modules 490 and 496. Modules 490 comprise circuits that keep track of path history 492 and that are responsible for error encoding 494. Modules 496 include packet framing circuits 498, modulators 500 and transmitters 502 connected to transmit antennas (not shown in FIG. 38).

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (37):**

Beam compensation pertains to the assignment of individual radio beams from the constellation of satellites to delineated regions on the ground with fixed boundaries called "cells." This beam management system offers enhanced frequency coordination and communication reliability. Beam compensation substantially eliminates the problem of rapid "hand-offs" of a communication channel among the multiple beams of one satellite or between satellites as one satellite moves as one satellite moves out of range of subscribers within the cell and another takes over to supply service to the cell.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (38):**

The system allocates the radio beams which are generated by the satellites. These beams are precisely controlled so that they illuminate "Earth-fixed cells" as opposed to "satellite-fixed cells." In previous satellite communication schemes, spacecraft which are not held stationary over one particular location on the Earth in geosynchronous orbits fly over large regions of the Earth very rapidly. The radio beams generated by these fast moving spacecraft sweep across vast regions of the Earth's surface at the same rate of speed. If these beams were visible to the eye, they would paint bright circular and elliptical patches of light on the ground beneath the satellite which emitted them. In a system that employs satellite-



fixed cells, the "footprint" of the radio beams propagated by the spacecraft defines the zone on the ground called a "cell" which is illuminated by the spacecraft. This satellite-fixed cell moves constantly as the spacecraft moves around the globe. In sharp contrast, an "Earth-fixed cell" is a stationary region mapped onto the surface of the Earth that has permanent fixed boundaries, just like a city or a state. Although the rapidly moving satellites still shine their radio beams over the ground in rapidly moving footprints, the locations of the footprints at any given time do not determine the location of the unchanging Earth-fixed cells. The great advantage provided by using cells having boundaries that are fixed to the Earth is realized when a subscriber being served by one satellite must switch to another beam in the same satellite or to a second satellite because the first is moving out of range below the local horizon. With satellite-fixed cells, this "handover" involves the assignment to the terminal of a new communication channel within the new beam or new satellite. This assignment process takes time and consumes processing capacity at both the terminal and the satellite. It is also subject to blocking, call interruption, and call dropping if there is not an idle communication channel in the next serving beam or satellite. The Earth-fixed cell method avoids these problems by allocating communication channels (frequency, code, and/or time slot) on an Earth-fixed cell basis rather than on a satellite-fixed cell basis. Regardless of which satellite/beam is currently serving a particular cell, the terminal maintains the same channel assignment, thus eliminating the "handover" problem.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (43):**

FIG. 48 is a flow chart 618 which discloses one implementation of the preferred embodiment of beam compensation. A packet 422 is shown as it progresses through mapping and switching hardware which directs the packet 422 to the beam which is currently serving the Earth-fixed supercell 604 and cell 606 in which the destination terminal 619 resides. The incoming packet 422 possesses "node" 620 and "call identification (ID)" 622 bits that comprise a terrestrial location identification about the terminal where the call originated. The substance of the phone call, such as voice or video information, has been digitized and is carried as the payload portion 426 of the packet 422. The node 620 identifies the satellite S currently serving the destination terminal 619. The call ID 622 is used as an input to a cell ID map 624, which is used as a translation device for a fast packet switch 438 that actually selects the beam B that will be used to deliver the payload 426. The call ID map 624 identifies the supercell 604, cell 606, and channel 626 assigned to the destination terminal 619 within this node 620 as identified by the call ID 622 in the incoming packet 422. In the present context, a channel 626 is a portion of beam B that has been allocated into several frequencies. Output beams are recorded in a position/output beam map 630. The satellite beam B which is currently assigned to serve a particular

supercell 604 is also a function of the instantaneous position of the satellite S which is generating beams B to handle a given call. This position information is produced by autonomous orbit position determination software 628. Once the channel 626, cell 606, and beam assignments have been derived, these assignments are appended to the payload 426 of the packet 422, replacing the call ID 622. After mapping, the modified packet 632 is then transmitted to the fast packet switch 438, which uses this information to direct the packet 422 to the appropriate buffer slot in the beam B currently serving this supercell 604. The transmission system determines the frequency that will be used for the transmission of the packet 422 based on the selected channel, and picks the time slot for transmission based on the selected cell 606. In the original embodiment of the beam compensation invention, the time slot is 1.444 milliseconds in duration, and the frequency domain modulation (FDM) cycle for the beams is 23.111 milliseconds long. The time required for communication is 1.156 milliseconds, and 0.289 milliseconds of guard time is provided. The receive beams lag the transmit beams by twice the time encountered by the transit delay between the user and the satellite. This lag time varies from 6.8 milliseconds for supercells at the edge of the footprint to 4.7 milliseconds for supercells directly below the satellite. The variation over a supercell 604 ranges from 0.04 milliseconds for cells 606 directly below the satellite to 0.7 milliseconds for cells 606 at the edge of the footprint.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (44):**

The beams B generated by antenna facets (not shown in FIG. 48, but shown below in FIGS. 49 and 50) on the satellites S include 256 transmit and 256 receive scanning beams. The satellites travel at an orbital height of 700 km and service cells within a 40 degree terminal elevation mask angle footprint. The satellite footprint 602 measures approximately 1.6 million square kilometers. The satellite antenna beams B that service cells 606 directly below the satellite S have a gain of 37.7 dB and half power beamwidths of 2.6 degrees. The beams B that service cells 606 at the edge of the satellite footprint 602 have a gain of 40 dB and half power beamwidth of 1.8 degrees. The beams illuminate circular spots on the Earth's surface of approximately 800 square kilometers. The square inscribed within this circular spot has an area of 512 square kilometers (22.6 km sides). This geometry provides 1.84 km (13%) of overlap at the cell corners. The overlap 615 mitigates the effects of satellite position errors and beam pointing errors. The tolerable error limits are 300 meters maximum for satellite position determination error and 1.5 km (0.17 degree) maximum for beam pointing errors. The movement of the beam footprint 602 on the Earth's surface due to the motion of the satellite S is less than 12 meters over the 1.444 millisecond dwell time, and less than 200 meters during the 23.111 millisecond supercell timing cycle. Instead of computing the required pointing

angles for each spot beam every 1.444 milliseconds, the pointing angles for the center of the supercell may be computed every 23.111 milliseconds, and the beam B is then positioned relative to this center for each cell. The rotation of the Earth contributes an error to this computation, but is less than 6% of the effect of satellite motion, and the same method can be used to compensate for this motion. The same method can also be used to compensate for satellite attitude motion (roll, pitch, and yaw). When a supercell 604 is contained within the footprints 602 of two or more satellites, then the satellites S negotiate among themselves as to which ones will service that supercell 604. One satellite may be assigned complete responsibility or the frequency allocation may be divided among several satellites. Each cell 606 is designed to provide service for up to 720 16-kilobit per second subscribers using portable terminals, and 360 terminals operating at 64-kilobits per second.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (45):**

The beam compensation invention described above offers several advantages over previous beam allocation systems. Terminals are served by the footprint 602 of the satellite that happens to be passing overhead at the time a particular call flows through a given terminal. By allocating the beams to Earth-fixed cells as opposed to satellite-fixed cells, the problem of performing frequent "hand-offs" from satellite to satellite is substantially eliminated, since a terminal keeps the same frequency (channel) and time slot (cell) for the duration of the call even though it communicates via different beams and satellites during the call. A similar system using satellite-fixed cells with each satellite footprint partitioned into approximately four thousand cells would require a cell hand-off approximately every five seconds. The utilization of the beam compensation invention described above requires these undesirable hand-offs only when a subscriber using a portable P or mobile M terminal actually transits across a cell boundary. The Earth-fixed cell method also avoids the danger of accidentally terminating a call if all of the channels in the cell to which the beams are switched are already occupied. The allocation method of the present invention that switches a call from the beams of one satellite to another is completely transparent to the customer. The Earth-fixed cell technique also offers enormous spectral efficiency, since 100% of the frequencies between the cells and between the satellites are constantly reused. Similar systems using satellite-fixed cells often divide the assigned frequencies into bands assigned to satellites to avoid frequency conflicts, but that procedure is an inefficient use of the valuable frequency spectrum.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (61):**

The spaceborne antennas 702 are capable of providing a gain of 45 dB at the periphery of each footprint and 42 dB at the nadir

position. Because the beams generated by the spaceborne antennas 702 are so powerful, Earth-based terminals can incorporate low power antenna designs which substantially eliminate any radiation hazards that might otherwise harm the user. Each antenna uses a combination of the 20 and 30 GHz frequency bands for satellite to ground communications, and propagates 256 simultaneous beams, which are multiplexed to 4,096 positions. Beams aimed at the horizon possess an elliptical, as opposed to a circular or polygonal, shape to compensate for the low grazing angle, so that a constant Earth coverage footprint is maintained. Uncorrected beams have an elliptical ground pattern which degrades spectral reuse efficiency. Electronic beam steering also permits the independent control of directivity gain and power gain. The beam steering provides a convenient method of correcting power levels during rain fades. The transmitted power gain from the satellite can be increased on transmit to overcome downlink fading. Satellite receive power gain can be increased during receive to overcome uplink fading. The use of these two techniques overcomes possibly poor communication performance during rainy weather conditions.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (66):**

Every satellite S controls the assignment of channels to terminals requesting services. When a terminal has more than one satellite in view, the satellites monitor the signal quality and select which one is best suited to handle the call to the terminal. The receive beam from the ground terminal lags the transmit beam emitted from the satellite by a fixed interval. The terminal transmits its data to the satellite at a delay specified by the satellite in its preceding scan. This method is used to compensate for delay differences caused by variations in path lengths. The scan pattern among beams is coordinated to insure that all cells being scanned at one instant are separated by sufficient distance to eliminate interference among many closely-spaced customers. An electronic pushbroom carries the beams through one beam position in the direction of satellite travel, and then performs a flyback. Each beam carries a pilot tone which identifies each beam for terrestrial terminals. Components on board each satellite measure time delay and Doppler shift of each subscriber signal to determine the location of the subscriber within a particular beam footprint. Because the satellite antennas operate at a relatively high gain, the footprints on the ground are relatively small. Since the cells are small and the satellite footprint moves rapidly over the Earth's surface, any particular terminal remains in the same cell for only a few seconds. To avoid the rapid handoff from satellite to satellite every few seconds, the innovative logical/physical cell mapping scheme described above as Beam Compensation is utilized in conjunction with the present invention.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (80):**

At any given time, three of the sixty antenna panels 814 are pointed toward the Earth's surface and are transmitting and receiving signals. As the satellite 810 revolves, antenna panels 814 become active as they move into position facing the Earth E, and also terminate their activity as they turn away from the Earth. This continuous hand-off of the communication operation from one set of antenna panels 814 to another is controlled by Earth sensors, and insures that radio beams B from the satellite 810 are always illuminating the footprints 602 on the surface. The Gearsat.TM. embodiment 810 derives its name from the spatial synchronization of the antenna panels 814 with specific regions of the ground that are illuminated by the beams generated by the antennas. Like the engaged teeth of two mechanical gears, particular antenna panels 814 in the array are matched with particular regions on the ground. Radio beams B emanating from the sixty panels 814 are essentially "locked" or dedicated to specific footprints 602 or cells below it on the Earth's surface. While the text above specifies one particular satellite configuration that offers this form of spatial synchronization among antennas 814 and beam footprints 602, the reader will appreciate that the central objective of providing a dedicated relationship among many antennas and footprints may be carried out using a wide variety of various implementations without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention claimed below. For example, an alternative embodiment of Gearsat.TM. could simply wobble, rock or nutate periodically to provide a partial rotation motion that would direct antennas beams across predetermined regions on the ground. The Gearsat.TM. motion need not be a complete rotation through 360 degrees of arc. Any spatial synchronization of moving antennas which maps antenna beams to particular areas on the Earth's surface would implement the Gearsat.TM. invention.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (83):**

The diagram 818 shown in FIG. 68 reveals subsystems that provide Electrical Power 826; Attitude and Orbit Determination and Control 828; Propulsion 834; and Command and Data Handling 824. Each of these subsystems are connected to a bus 820 that is also coupled to a Communications Payload Subsystem 822, which includes the fast packet switch 438 and its related circuitry. The Electrical Power Subsystem 826 (EPS) derives energy from the photovoltaic cells covering panels 704 (solar arrays S/A), and power is stored in nickel metal-hydride batteries. The Attitude and Orbit Determination and Control Subsystem (AODC) 828 maintains the orientation of the spacecraft using three axis stabilization methods. Actuators (ACTRS) 832 are employed to perform the stabilization process. Sun sensors 830 are used as an initial reference once the satellite achieves orbit. Afterwards, inertial measuring units, magnetometers, and information gathered from call traffic is used to keep the craft on course and steady in its desired position. Each satellite "knows" its own position and the positions of all the other satellites in the constellation, as well

as all the positions of terminals on the ground. A Propulsion Subsystem 834 uses redundant pulse-plasma thrusters which accomplish maneuvers that include orbit insertion, drag make-up, stationkeeping and deorbit at the end of the satellites lifetime. A Command and Data Handling Subsystem (C&DH) 824 acquires, conditions and formats all satellite data and decodes, stores and distributes all satellite commands. The C&DH 824 comprises a processor with a 4 Gb solid-state RAM memory that is coupled to a local area network (LAN). A microprocessor analyzes, interprets and compresses on-board data, and another microprocessor, running at 20 million instructions per second (MIPS), is dedicated to processing traffic. A Cabling Subsystem 836 contains all the conductors that unite the power and signal electronics on the ship. A Structure Subsystem 838 comprises the geodesic, concave, stackable support skeleton which bears the antenna array 700. A Mechanisms Subsystem 840 includes components that deploy and orient the solar panels 704. A Thermal Control Subsystem 842 includes blankets and coats of paint that manage the thermal conditions of the satellite S.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (97):**

The values presented below the column labeled "Elevation" are angles measured in degrees with respect to the direction of the Nadir. The values presented below the column labeled "Azimuth" are angles measured in degrees with respect to the direction of the Velocity Vector 802, as shown in FIGS. 77 and 78.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (98):**

Each of the embodiments of the invention, Domesat.TM., Gearsat.TM., Batsat.TM. and Callingsat.TM. may incorporate teflon thrusters for precise altitude, attitude and position control. These thrusters use small pieces of a material such as teflon as fuel. Extremely small amounts of the teflon are expelled from miniature nozzles, and the slight reactions of the spacecraft provide highly precise position control.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (124):**

Spacecraft Position and Attitude Determination

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (125):**

Each spacecraft in the constellation requires orbital position information about itself and other satellites in the constellation. Each satellite carries a navigation computer which 1000 that depicts a satellite S in low Earth orbit. The satellite is capable of routing communication signals or telephone calls carrying voice, data, and video signals among ground stations 1006 and 1008 and other

satellites 1002. The AOD software is used to calculate position information accurate to within 10 km for a constellation of 840 satellites S orbiting at 700 km (435 miles). Although the preferred embodiment employs an orbital altitude of 700 km, the invention may utilize an altitude of from approximately 525 km to approximately 1400 km. The population of the constellation may include one hundred or more satellites, which are deployed in at least eight orbital planes. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, each of the orbital planes is inclined to the equator at an angle of 98.2 degrees. This inclination angle may, however, vary from 65 to 125 degrees. The eccentricity of the orbits may extend from 0.001 to 0.005. A complete listing of the computer software that embodies the AOD software is contained in Appendix A. This software runs on a conventional IBM compatible personal computer and simulates orbital position determination for selected embodiments of the present invention. This software enables a person skilled in the art to which the AOD software pertains to practice this portion of the invention without undue experimentation.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (126):**

The packets 422 that are transmitted and received by the satellites S include headers 424 which hold address information that enables switching circuitry 438 aboard each spacecraft to route the packet to its proper destination. The header 424 includes time and frequency information that is used by a microprocessor called an orbit determination processor aboard each satellite to generate an inter-satellite almanac packet. Unlike communications packets 422 which are constantly relayed among spacecraft in the system to their final destinations on the ground, inter-satellite almanac packets are broadcast among the entire constellation at least once every day. These inter-satellite packets contain an almanac message that contains information which is used to calculate orbital position.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (129):**

FIG. 81 is a block diagram that reveals details of position determination circuitry 1026. A communication link 1028 conveys information to a demodulation stage 1030, which forwards information about the time of perception of packets 1040 to a time and frequency synchronization stage 1042. A frequency synthesizer 1032 is coupled to the data demodulation stage 1030 and to a phase locked loop stage 1036. The frequency synthesizer 1032 is also coupled to an oscillator 1034. The phase locked loop stage 1036 and an antenna control stage 1024 receive pilot tones 1038 as inputs. The phase locked loop stage 1036 measures Doppler shifts 1044, while the antenna control stage 1024 determines correct antenna pointing directions 1048. The Doppler measurements 1044 serve as inputs to an autonomous orbit determination processor 1046. The pointing directions 1048 are used for attitude determination 1050.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (130):**

FIG. 82 is a schematic diagram 1052 showing a satellite S in orbit communicating with a gateway G. The figure illustrates the calculation of attitude information computed by the spacecraft. The AOD methods not only provide position information which is used to select optimal pathways for routing communications traffic, but also supplies output that is utilized for spacecraft guidance and control and inter-satellite antenna steering and generates pseudo-ranging packets for highly accurate radio determination satellite service (RDSS). The AOD software incorporated in the preferred embodiment is presented in Appendix A. This program autonomously determines the position of each satellite in the constellation on board each satellite, as well as the position of all the other satellites in the constellation. The software also autonomously provides altitude and attitude information for each satellite.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (132):**

Switching circuits about each satellite in the constellation transport packets of data through a low Earth orbit satellite network. Each satellite furnishes intelligent and autonomous on-board switching capabilities and provides synchronous, circuit-switched communication services with uniform end-to-end transmission delays. The routing methods implemented on the switching hardware manage the satellite communication links between the origin and destination of telephone calls which convey voice, data, or video information. The spaceborne switches are capable of selecting the best series of connections from a terrestrial gateway or terminal up through a satellite constellation and back down to Earth. The pathway that is selected for a particular call must be highly adaptive and able to change rapidly in response to the constantly changing geometry of the low Earth orbit constellation. Based upon inputs from the position determination algorithms that define the length of each link in the system, the methods implemented by the present invention determine the optimal route for each transmission from each satellite and also establishes the most efficient distribution pattern of traffic throughout the system.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (134):**

The traffic routing switches overcome the limitations encountered by conventional packet switching using virtual circuits. The present invention utilizes a "datagram" approach that routes every packet conveyed by the system independently at every node in the network. The packets are directed along an optimized pathway through the network by a fast packet switch that directs traffic based on instructions from a microprocessor that continuously runs an adaptive routing algorithm. This microprocessor uses orbital position information generated aboard each spacecraft to monitor the rapidly



changing topology of the constellation and the distribution of traffic among its nodes and links.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (135):**

In general, the hardware that is responsible for traffic routing comprises a self-routing fast packet switch, an input packet processor, a routing cache memory, and an adaptive routing processor. The input packet processor functions like a gatekeeper or guide that extracts the destination node address from each packet and uses it to access routing information stored in the routing cache memory. The adaptive routing processor constantly updates the routing cache memory so each satellite has an accurate "knowledge" of the whereabouts of all its neighbors, and of the expected packet delay from adjacent nodes to all possible destination nodes. Based upon this position and expected delay information, the adaptive routing processor selects the best pathway from a particular satellite to a single neighboring satellite, and the packet is then moved through internal switch circuitry onboard the satellite on its way to other spacecraft in its journey to some eventual destination on Earth. The present invention optimizes the utilization of the network facilities and minimizes transmission delays and variances of transmission delays. By precalculating the optimal route for each packet one step at a time at each satellite, the amount of time required to process individual packets is greatly reduced.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (139):**

The satellite altitude is fixed at 700 km (435 miles). The relatively large number of satellites in the preferred embodiment of the constellation has been selected to provide continuous coverage of the Earth's surface at high angles of radiation with respect to the Earth's surface, thus avoiding foliage, terrain, and minimizing the length of the signal's passage through rain. Each of the individual 336 spacecraft functions as a sovereign switch which knows the position of its neighbors, and independently handles traffic without ground control. The satellites are capable of transporting calls to millions of customers using portable mobile and fixed residential and business terminals, and gateways to public phone networks. The constellation uses the 20 and 30 GHz frequency bands for communications between Earth and the constellation, and the 60 GHz band for communicating among the satellites. The use of these extremely high frequencies allows for the use of relatively low power, miniaturized antenna components both on the ground and aboard the satellites. The entire constellation is designed to serve over twenty million subscribers and 60,000 full time DS-0 (64kbps) circuits. The satellites will be coupled to traditional public and private phone systems on the ground through gateways which each utilize relatively large antennas and handle large volumes of call traffic. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, this interface

between the terrestrial systems gateway and the terrestrial network is based on current standard ISDN interfaces to preserve compatibility. Unlike presently available cellular systems which relay calls to subscribers from local radio towers, the present invention offers direct communication between the satellites of the constellation and individuals using lightweight portable mobile and fixed telephones.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (140):**

One of the important inputs to the fast packet switch circuitry is a continuous stream of orbital position information which is generated aboard each satellite by a navigation computer running Autonomous Orbit Determination algorithms (AOD). The AODs compute ephemeris parameters for each satellite. These parameters are broadcast to every satellite in the constellation, so that all the spacecraft "know" their own positions and the position of every other satellite in the network. One embodiment of the AOD algorithms employs an inter-satellite ranging algorithm that calculates distances between spacecraft by measuring time delays that are inherent in fast-packet switching transmissions. A second embodiment of the AOD software incorporates an algorithm which fixes spacecraft position by computing differences in Doppler shifts of satellite transmissions. A third version uses known location fixed Earth reference stations to determine position. Once the orbital position information is generated, it is used as an input to an adaptive routing processor which runs an adaptive routing algorithm (ARA). The ARA constantly monitors the changing locations of all the spacecraft in the network, and also keeps track of communications traffic congestion among the links and nodes of the system. The adaptive routing processor produces an output called "Next-node-in-path-to-destination". As the name implies, this output contains information and provides instructions for moving communications data through the network one node at a time.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (216):**

Packets 422 are received from mobile and fixed terminals located under the satellite footprint via Mobile Terminal-Satellite Links (MTSLs) and Fixed Terminal-Satellite Links (FTSLs); gateways used for bringing in traffic from calls originating or terminating on the public network via Gateway to Satellite Links (GSLs); and other satellites via the InterSatellite Links (ISLs). Packets 422 are grouped in two categories, those carrying user data comprising voice, video, digital data, etc.; and those carrying control messages that are used in network administration and control functions. The Fast Packet Switch (FPS) is responsible for switching each incoming packet to its appropriate destination. Packets can be switched to satellites, gateways and terminals. Those destined for other satellites are transported over ISL output links. Packets passing

through satellite nodes on their way to their final destinations may contain user data or control messages. Packets directed to a gateway using a GSL output link may also carry user data or control messages. If the packet type is user data, the call associated with the packet originates or terminates on the public network. If the packet conveys a control message, it terminates at the gateway node common control. Mobile and fixed terminals can communicate directly with satellites in orbit. Mobile terminal to satellite links can convey packets at 16Kb per second. Two Kb of the 16Kb MTSL capacity is reserved for a 2 Kb data channel. Fixed terminal to satellite links are 64Kb channels, of which 8Kb is reserved for data. Packets traveling to mobile and fixed terminals include user data packets that carry voice messages, and control message packets bearing call control information. Packets may also be delivered to a node Message Transport System (MTS) if the packet type is a control message.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (232):**

In sharp contrast, an "Earth-fixed cell" is a stationary region mapped to an "Earth-fixed grid" that has permanent fixed boundaries, just like a city or a state. Although the rapidly moving satellites still shine their radio beams over the ground in rapidly moving footprints, the locations of the footprints at any given time do not determine the location of the unchanging Earth-fixed cells. The great advantage provided by using cells having boundaries that are fixed with respect to an Earth-fixed grid is realized when a subscriber being served by one satellite must switch to another beam in the same satellite or to a second satellite because the first is moving out of range below the local horizon. With satellite-fixed cells, this "hand-off" involves the assignment to the terminal of a new communication channel within the new beam or new satellite.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (233):**

This assignment process takes time and consumes processing capacity at both the terminal and the satellite. It is also subject to blocking, call interruption, and call dropping if there is not an idle communication channel in the next serving beam or satellite. The Earth-fixed cell method avoids these problems by allocating communication channels (frequency, code, and/or time slot) on an Earth-fixed cell basis rather than on a satellite-fixed cell basis. Regardless of which satellite/beam is currently serving a particular cell, the terminal maintains the same channel assignment, thus substantially eliminating the "hand-off" problem.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (234):**

The present invention uses software that provides position and attitude information about each satellite in the constellation. The Earth's surface is initially mapped into an unchanging "Earth-fixed

grid" which each satellite can accurately locate from its position data. Each satellite is capable of steering, transmitting and receiving beams conveying packets of information to the Earth-fixed grid. The beams are continually adjusted to compensate the effects of satellite motion, attitude changes, and the rotation of the Earth. In accordance with the preferred embodiment of the invention, each spacecraft possesses the following capabilities:

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (237):**

to map from destination cell to the beam currently serving the cell;

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (238):**

to switch packets to the beam currently serving the destination cell;

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (239):**

to "hand-off" a terminal from one beam to the next or from one satellite to the next without changing the channel assignment of the terminal; and

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (243):**

FIG. 105 is a schematic diagram 1210 which illustrates twenty-one orbits 1211 which enclose the Earth E. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, each orbital plane contains forty active satellites 1212 spaced evenly around the orbit 1211, along with up to four spares. The constellation of satellites is designed so that a subscriber's terminal can "see" two or more satellites most of the time. This gives the terminal some protection against shadowing by terrain, allows load sharing among satellites, and also provides redundant coverage in the event of satellite failure. In the specification and claims which follow, the word "terminal" is used to identify portable terminals P like hand-held phones, mobile terminals M such as those mounted in vehicles and fixed terminals F like a permanently installed phone that is available for public use. These terminals are different from gateways G which are generally large terrestrial receiving stations that connect the constellation with public switched networks.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (245):**

When the constellation is deployed, each launch vehicle carries a number of satellites. These satellites 1212 are released in their proper orbit plane 1211, and each satellite then adjusts its position within the plane. Onboard thrusters and an autonomous navigation

system continuously monitor and adjust the satellite's altitude, attitude, and position within the orbit plane. A number of spare satellites are placed in orbit along with the first launch of active satellites.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (246):**

For a satellite in low Earth orbit, the satellite footprint sweeps over the Earth's surface at approximately 25,000 Km/hr. If the cell pattern of the present invention moved with the satellite footprint, a terminal would remain in one cell for only a few seconds before a channel reassignment or "hand-off" to the next cell is required. As is the case with terrestrial cellular systems, frequent hand-offs result in inefficient channel utilization, high processing costs, and lower system capacity.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (247):**

FIGS. 107a and 107b illustrate the preferred embodiment of the invention which substantially eliminates the "hand-off" and frequency coordination problems associated with LEO networks that utilize satellite-fixed cells. FIG. 107a is a view 1218 that reveals the incidence of radio beams from a satellite 1212 that form a footprint 1216 over California. FIG. 107b is a diagram 1222 that depicts the relationships among the Earth-fixed grid 1220, a supercell 1224 and the nine cells 1226 within the supercell 1224. FIG. 107a shows an Earth-fixed grid 1220 of supercells 1224 covering the continental United States.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (248):**

In the preferred embodiment, the Earth's surface is mapped into this Earth-fixed grid 1220, which comprises approximately 20,000 "supercells" 1224. Each supercell 1224 contains nine cells 1226. Each supercell is a square 160 km on each side, while each cell 1226 is a square measuring 53.3 km on each side. The supercells 1224 are arranged in bands that are parallel to the Equator. There are approximately 250 supercells 1224 in the band at the Equator, and the number per band decreases in proportion to the cosine of the latitude of their location on the globe. Because the number of supercells per band is not constant, the "north-south" supercell borders in adjacent bands are not aligned. A fixed algorithmic relation defines the mapping between supercell coordinates and latitude-longitude coordinates. A "time-of-day" relation defines which orbital plane has primary coverage responsibility for each supercell 1224, and the satellites' orbital position completes the "Earth-coordinates-to-serving-satellite" relation. This relation makes it possible to determine at any time which satellite has primary coverage responsibility for a terminal based on the terminal location.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (250):**

Each footprint 1216 encompasses a maximum of 64 supercells, or 576 cells. The actual number of cells 1226 for which a satellite is responsible is a variable that depends on satellite location and spacing between satellites. As a satellite passes over, it steers its antenna beams to the fixed cell locations within its footprint. This beam steering compensates for the satellite's motion as well as for the Earth's rotation. As an analogous example, the beam steering method employed by each satellite to track a cell as the satellite flies overhead is similar to the motion of the tread of a bulldozer over the ground. Each spot on the tread remains in contact with a single point on the ground while the bulldozer moves along. Frequencies and time slots are associated with each cell and are managed by the current "serving" satellite. As long as a terminal remains within the cell, it maintains the same channel assignment for the duration of a call, regardless of how many satellites and beams are involved. Channel reassignments become the exception rather than the normal case, thus eliminating much of the frequency coordination and hand-off overhead.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (253):**

The satellite footprint 1216 comprises a collection of contiguous cells 1226, and is somewhat analogous to a terrestrial cellular system. Each cell 1226 supports a number of communication channels. Terminals within the cell 1226 share these channels using a combination of multiple-access methods that are described in more detail below. Cells are arranged in a pattern which allows frequencies and time slots to be reused many times within a satellite footprint 1216 without interference between adjacent cells 1226. The high gain satellite antennas that will be employed by the preferred embodiment produce small cells (53.3 Km on each side) which result in extremely efficient use of spectrum, high channel density and low power requirements.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (255):**

FIG. 111a is a schematic diagram 1258 that shows a single satellite 1212 flying over a target Earth-fixed cell 1226t in three sequential positions. At each of the three positions marked Time 1 (T1), Time 2 (T2) and Time 3 (T3), the satellite 1212 steers beams 1219 to a subscriber in a target Earth-fixed cell 1226t using a mobile, portable or fixed terminal or a gateway which communicate with the satellite using a frequency channel that does not change.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (258):**

FIGS. 111d, 111e and 111f are simplified views of a hand-off

process utilized by the present invention. In each of these three views, two satellites employed by the present invention 1212a and 1212b flying in the same orbit 1211 use three antenna elements like those shown in FIG. 111c to direct packets Pk to subscribers on the ground in a target Earth-fixed cell 1226t. Each packet Pk carries a header and a message "payload" 1274. The header includes address information comprising a "destination node" 1270 and a "call ID" 1272. In each of these three drawings, incoming packets Pk have been routed through the network to satellites 1212a or 1212b on their way to subscribers located in cell 1226t using terminals T1 and T2. In this example, these terminals do not change positions, and therefore, remain in the same Earth-fixed cell 1226t, which is also identified as C4.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (259):**

FIG. 111d is a "snapshot" of satellites 1212a and 1212b at time 1a. FIGS. 111e and 111f are similar snapshots of the same satellites, but at slightly later successive times 2a and 2b. In FIG. 111d, beams 1219b from the central antenna element 1213b of satellite 12a provide service to fixed location terminals T1 and T2 in target cell 1226t (C4). At slightly later time 2a which is pictured in FIG. 111e, satellite 12a has moved farther away from the terminals in target cell 1226t, but the electronic beam steering circuits aboard satellite 1212a have switched the service to the same terminals T1 and T2 to a different antenna panel 1213c. This "antenna-to-antenna" hand-off is completely undetected by the subscribers using terminals T1 and T2, who continue to enjoy uninterrupted service via beam 1219c without changing their assigned communication channel. At an even later time 3a, which is frozen in the view offered by FIG. 111f, satellite 1212a has moved out of range of the unmoving cell C4 in which terminals T1 and T2 are located. Before satellite 1212a is no longer capable of servicing T1 and T2, the satellites 1212a and 1212b cooperatively hand-off responsibility for continuing the supply of packets Pk to these subscribers, and 1212b assumes control of the call traffic to T1 and T2 using its own antenna panel 1213a and its own beam 1219a. Since T1 and T2 remain within their original cell 1226t, they maintain the same channel assignment, unlike the rapid hand-offs that would be required if satellite-fixed cells were involved. The simplification of the hand-off process results from the fact that terminals stay in the same cell even though the satellites move. Communication resources are allocated on a cell by cell basis.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (260):**

The specific algorithm that is employed by the preferred embodiment of the invention involves measuring and comparing the distances between the first satellite 1212a that is serving a target Earth-fixed cell 1226t at a given time, and the distance between a second next satellite 1212b and the target cell 1226t. When the

distance between the centroid of the target cell 1226t to the second next satellite 1212b is less than the distance from the same centroid to the first satellite 1212a, the satellite-to-satellite hand-off occurs.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (261):**

In stark contrast, FIGS. 111g, 111h and 111i reveal the deleterious consequences of furnishing the same service to two fixed location terminals T1 and T2 using a communication system that employs satellite-fixed cells, instead of the Earth-fixed cells scenario pictured in FIGS. 111d, 111e and 111f. Satellites 1261a and 1261b are shown in orbits 1211' communicating with terminals T1 and T2 via beams 1264 at successive times 1b, 2b and 3b. In FIG. 111g, T1 and T2 are illuminated by cell C2 of satellite 1261a at time 1b. In this system, however, the cells move along with the satellites 1261a and 1261b, and continually sweep over the Earth's surface. As shown in FIG. 111h, at time 2b, T1 and T2 are no longer in cell C2 of satellite 1261a. At time 2b, T1 is in cell C3 of satellite 1261a and T2 occupies cell C4 of satellite 1261a. As a result of the motion of the cells, which each employ different frequencies to avoid signal interference, satellite 1261a had to change the channel assignment for T1 when cell C2 moved past it and cell C3 moved over it. FIG. 111h shows that, on some occasions, two relatively close terminals T1 and T2 may be served by different cells. FIG. 111i reveals the situation at time 3b. Satellite 1261a has moved completely out of range of T1 and T2, and cell C2 of satellite 1261b has assumed responsibility for the delivery of packets Pk to the subscribers. FIGS. 111g, 111h and 111i exhibit the extremely complex hand-off scheme that must be used by a network using satellite-fixed cells. Each time a terminal is passed from one cell to the next it must be assigned a new communication channel (frequency). These very frequent hand-offs can result in irritating noise during a call, and, in the worst case, a complete drop-out of the call.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (262):**

FIG. 112a is a schematic block diagram 1268 which discloses a hardware implementation of the preferred embodiment. An incoming packet Pk is shown as it progresses through mapping and switching hardware which directs the packet Pk to the Earth-fixed cell beam 1219 which is currently serving the Earth-fixed supercell 1224 and cell 1226 in which the destination terminal resides. The incoming packet Pk possesses node and call ID bits 1270 and 1272 that comprise a terrestrial location identification I about the terminal where the call originated. The substance of the phone call, such as voice or video information, has been digitized and is carried as the payload portion 1274 of each packet. The node 1270 identifies the satellite 1212 currently serving the destination terminal. The call ID 1272 is used as an index 1276 to a cell ID map 1278, which is used as a



translation device that is upstream from a fast packet switch 1302 that actually selects the Earth-fixed cell beam 1219 that will be used to deliver the payload 1274. The cell ID map 1278 identifies the supercell entry 1286, cell entry 1284, and channel entry 1282 assigned to the destination terminal within this node 1270 as identified by the call ID 1272 in the incoming packet Pk. In the present context, a channel entry 1282 is a portion of beam that has been allocated into several frequencies. The satellite beam which is currently assigned to serve a particular supercell entry 1286 is also a function of the instantaneous position of the satellite which is generating Earth-fixed cell beams 1219 to handle a given call. This position information is produced by an autonomous orbit determination (AOD) algorithm 1288. The output of the cell ID map 1278 is a supercell entry 1286, which is used as an index to a position/output beam map 1290 that, in turn, selects an output beam 1292. Once the channel 1294, cell 1296, and output beam assignments 1298 have been derived, these assignments are appended to the payload 1274 of the packet Pk, replacing the call ID 1272. The packet Pk is then forwarded to the fast packet switch 1302 through input 1300, which uses this information to direct the packet to an output 1304 to a packet buffer 1309. Within this buffer 1309, the packet is directed to the appropriate slot in the Earth-fixed cell beam 1219 currently serving a particular supercell. After the packet emerges from the switch 1302, it carries a channel designation 1306 that specifies some combination of time slot, frequency, coding scheme or terminal identifier, as well as a cell designation 1308 that specifies a time interval. The transmitter 1310 determines the frequency that will be used for the transmission of the packet based on the selected channel, and picks the time slot for transmission based on the selected cell. FIG. 112b furnishes another schematic block diagram 1311 which may be utilized to implement the present invention.

#### Detailed Description Text - DETX (271):

FIG. 116 is an illustration of the Callingsat.TM. 1410 shown as it would appear in its fully opened and deployed position in low Earth orbit. An Earth-facing antenna array 1412 is used to provide reception of 30 GHz uplinks 1414 and also to provide transmission of 20 GHz downlinks 1416. The Earth-facing antenna array 1412 comprises individual electronically steered phased-array antennas 1418 located on eight mobile, fixed terminal satellite link M/FTSL antenna panel sets 1420 and on the Earth-facing surface of the primary bus structure 1422. Each M/FTSL antenna panel set 1420 has three adjoining antenna facet panels 1424. The M/FTSL panels are deployed at angles with respect to the Earth's surface that limit the required steering angle from the satellite to the portion of the Earth surface served by this antenna. Four intersatellite link ISL antenna arrays 1426 are located on the space-facing surface of the primary bus structure 1422. Four individual ISL antennas 1428 make up each of the ISL antenna arrays 1426. The ISL antennas 1428 are able to receive

and to transmit 60 GHz intersatellite links 1430. The 60 GHz intersatellite links 1430 provide communication among the constellation of Callingsats.TM..

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (283):**

The Astromast.TM. boom 1432 continues to extend to its full length. The satellite antennas and electronics operate most efficiently at low temperatures. They can most effectively dissipate the heat generated in their operation by radiating this heat via the back side of the M/FTSL antenna panel sets 1420 into "cold space" which has an ambient temperature of approximately 4 degrees Kelvin. If the radiation of the suns is allowed to impinge directly on the back surface of the M/FTSL antenna panel sets, this increases the effective ambient temperature, which would result in less efficient thermal dissipation, a higher operating temperature, and less efficiency. The present design uses the amorphous silicon solar arrays 1438 as a sun shade to effectively shield the Callingsat.TM. 1410 from the sun and thus to reduce the effective ambient temperature of the space into which the Callingsat.TM. 1410 dissipates heat. This is done by using amorphous silicon solar arrays 1438 that when fully extended on the Astromast.TM. boom 1432 between the Callingsat.TM. 1410 and the suns and oriented perpendicular to the suns, casts a shadow that completely covers the Callingsat.TM. 1410, including all antenna facet panels 1424. The amorphous silicon solar array position that provides maximum shading also provides the most efficient solar energy generation, since the array surface is maintained perpendicular to the sun's rays. The extension of the Astromast.TM. boom 1432 provides sufficient distance between the primary bus structure 1422 and the amorphous silicon solar arrays 1438, which, in turn, furnishes the required radiation shielding for the antennas 1418 and the ISL antennas 1428. In this embodiment, the Astromast.TM. boom 1432 is approximately twelve meters long when fully extended.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (285):**

FIG. 127 also illustrates the expansion of the solar array storage booms 1436 as the Astromast.TM. boom 1432 reaches its fully extended length. The solar array storage booms 1436 are coupled to each other using boom hinge mechanisms 1498. The solar array storage booms 1436 use the boom hinge mechanisms 1498 to pivot away from their parallel stored position towards a coaxial arrangement.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (286):**

FIG. 128 is an illustration 1500 which shows full extension solar array storage booms 1436 and the outer antenna arrays 1454. The solar array storage booms 1436 come into coaxial alignment with each other as the boom hinge mechanisms 1498 that couple them pivot to their

extended positions. Each end of each solar array storage boom 1436 is coupled to a deployment mechanism 1508. In FIG. 128 the cantilever booms 1442 can be seen as they would be attached to the solar array storage booms 1436 in a parallel fashion between the deployment mechanisms 1508. The boom crossmast 1434 rotates to position the solar array storage booms 1438 correctly for expansion of the amorphous silicon solar arrays 1436. The pulse plasma thrusters 1444, the storage batteries 1446, and the shunt regulators 1448 are seen as they are located on the boom crossmast 1434.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (299):**

FIG. 131 is a side view 1522 of a fully extended and deployed Callingsat.TM. 1410. This depiction shows how the advanced design of the Callingsat.TM. 1410 provides a large Earth-facing antenna array 1412 to provide a large volume of 30 GHz uplinks 1414 and 20 GHz downlinks 1416, and ISL antenna arrays 1426 to provide a large volume of 60 GHz intersatellite links 1430. This view also illustrates how the expandable Astromast.TM. boom 1432 is extended to position the amorphous silicon solar arrays 1438 correctly.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (329):**

The service area offered by the preferred embodiment of the present invention, the Earth's entire surface, is divided into a grid of 180,000 cells, similar in concept to the cells of terrestrial cellular systems. As a general rule for cellular systems, the smaller the cell, the higher the user density that can be served and the more efficiently the assigned spectrum can be reused within a service area, resulting in a higher system capacity for a given amount of spectrum. The cells are identical 53.3 by 53.3 km squares, with an area roughly equivalent to a large cell in a terrestrial cellular system, but extremely small and efficient compared with other satellite systems. The preferred embodiment uses a spectrum-efficient modulation and coding scheme that yields a capacity of over 1400 simultaneous full-duplex 16 Kbps connections within any cell. This 16 Kbps rate is used as the basic channel because it is the minimum that will support the high-quality voice service expected from a modem network. This equivalent basic channel rate is used to simplify and clarify capacity calculations, although 16 Kbps channels can and will be aggregated into a smaller number of high-rate channels for broadband applications. For example, a 1.544 Mbps T1 line would consume the same network access capacity as almost 100 basic 16 Kbps channels.

**Detailed Description Text - DETX (330):**

One of the advantages of wireless service is that system resources can be shared among users so that a given number of channels can efficiently support the demands of a larger number of users. For

example, if the average user only needs a channel for 10% of the network's busy period (this usage level is referred to as 0.1 Erlang), then the preferred embodiment's 1400 channels per cell could support 14,000 users with a low probability that they will be blocked when they request a channel. Obviously, usage level has a large effect on capacity measured by "number of users;" the present invention uses a conservative estimate of 0.1 Erlangs per user.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (335):**

System capacity depends entirely on a system of many satellites which uses a high preferred mask angle of at least forty degrees. This critical system parameter is only achievable through the use of a large number of satellites compared to previous proposed systems and of very high communications frequencies. Motorola's Iridium.TM. system, described in European Patent Application No. 891 184 58.2, is not designed to realize the system capacity and service levels that the present invention will achieve. Iridium.TM. is intended only as an adjunct or enhancement of conventional terrestrial cellular telephone service. Motorola's Iridium.TM. system is not designed to be a complete global communications system that is capable of supporting in excess of 2,000,000 simultaneous connections, representing over 20,000,000 users at typical business usage levels, and over 350 billion minutes of use per year. Only a system such as the preferred embodiment, which utilizes 840 satellites at a preferred minimum mask angle of forty degrees can accomplish these challenging objectives.

#### **Detailed Description Text - DETX (345):**

The angle measured upwards to the position of a satellite in the sky from the local horizon of a portable, mobile or fixed terminal or gateway.

#### **Detailed Description Paragraph Table - DETL (17):**

LIST OF REFERENCE	
CHARACTERS	10 End-to-end
network model	12 First user terminal
Calling network	14 First network interface
22 Operations traffic	16 Second network interface
24 User traffic	20 Second user terminal
26 Single satellite	28 Orbital
30 Terminal	31 Keypad and display
32 Analog voice signal	33 Call-progress tones and display circuits
34 A/D converter	36 Digitized voice output
38 Speech encoder	40 Digital encoded speech
42 Encryption equipment	44 Encryption key
46 Signalling and control processor	48 Encrypted output
50 Sequence numbers	52 Destination addresses
54 Signal packets	56 Packet assembler
58 Packets	60 Error encoder
62 Transmit buffer	64 Transmitter
66 Power control circuitry	68 Frame and bit timing circuitry
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#### Other Reference Publication - OREF (12):

V.H. MacDonald, "Advanced Mobile Phone Service: The Cellular Concept", 1979, pp. 15-41, published in The Bell System Technical

Journal, vol. 58, No. 1, Jan. 1979.

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